

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DJIBOU 00084 240903Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 MCE-00 ACDA-12 AID-05

IGA-02 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 PRS-01 USIA-06

DODE-00 HA-05 /097 W

-----115876 240920Z /23L

P R 240714Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 579

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T DJIBOUTI 0084

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIP, MILI, DJ, US

SUBJ: PRESIDENT PLEADS FOR MILITARY SUPPORT

REF: (AL DJIBOUTI 0080; (B) DJIBOUTI 0079; (C) DJIBOUTI 0054

1. IN MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ON 17 JAN, CHARGE AGAIN TOLD PRESIDENT THAT US ARMS ASSISTANCE TO DJIBOUTI DID NOT APPEAR TO PRESENT SOLUTION TO HIS PROBLEMS. CHARGE NOTED THAT SHOPPING LISTS PRESENTED WITH LETTERS OF 3 AND 10 JAN (REFTEL C) DID OFFER OPPORTUNITY FOR ASSISTANCE IN NON-LETHAL AREAS BUT THAT SUCH MATTERS WERE BEST EXAMINED FROM WASHINGTON PERSPECTIVE. I TOLD HIM THAT HIS LETTERS AND LIST HAD BEEN SENT TO WASHINGTON.

2. PRESIDENT, CLEARLY UNWILLING TO ACCEPT THIS RESPONSE TO HIS DESIRE FOR MILITARY HARDWARE AND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT, RETORTED THAT HIS COUNTRY WAS GRAVELY MENAGED ON BOTH SIDES BY POTENTIAL INVADING FORCES. HE SAID THAT DJIBOUTI'S TRUE FRIENDS WOULD BE IDENTIFIED BY THEIR ABILITY TO RESPOND QUICKLY TO HIS COUNTRY'S URGENT APPEALS. THE PRESIDENT AL-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 DJIBOU 00084 240903Z

LEGED THAT ALL OF HIS COMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS WOULD BE RESOLVED IF ONLY HE COULD SEAL OFF HIS FRONTIERS FROM FOREIGN PROVOCATEURS AND SUBVERSIVES. HE REPORTED THAT SEVERAL AFARS HE HAD CONTACTED FOR POSSIBLE PLACES IN HIS GOVERNMENT HAD INDICATED THAT THEY WERE AFRAID FOR THEIR LIVES IF THEY COLLABORATED WITH HIS GOVERNMENT (FYI, THIS AT VARIANCE WITH INFO PRESENTED REFTELS A AND B).

3. ASKED WHETHER THE PRESIDENT THOUGHT IT WOULD REALLY BE POSSIBLE TO SEAL OFF HIS FRONTIERS FROM OUTSIDERS WISHING ILL TO HIS GOVERNMENT, THE PRESIDENT INDICATED THAT WITH LOGISTICAL SUPPORT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO CONTROL THE FRONTIERS MUCH BETTER THAN NOW, WITH FEW VEHICLES AND NO COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT. THE CHARGE PROMISED TO FORWARD FAITHFULLY THE PRESIDENT'S ADMONITIONS AND REQUESTS TO WASHINGTON.

4. IN THE CONVERSATION, THE PRESIDENT AGAIN BRUSHED ASIDE THE CHARGE'S SUGGESTIONS OF VARIOUS WAYS IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO REOPEN BRIDGES WITH THE AFAR ELEMENTS OF THE POPULATION. THESE INCLUDED THE SHIPMENT OF SOME QUANTITIES OF US PL 480 RICE TO HUNGRY FAMILIES IN THE AFAR CITIES OF OBOCK, TADJOURAH OR DIKHIL. CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMS SUCH AS THE CHARGE WITNESSED IN LATIN AMERICA A FEW YEARS AGO WERE SUGGESTED AS A WAY OF SHOWING A HUMAN FACE TO THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. I SUGGESTED THAT SOME MEANS MIGHT BE ACHIEVED TO SATISFY TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF DJIBOUTI THROUGH SUCH PROGRAMS. THE PRESIDENT INDICATED NO INTEREST. HE WANTS MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND NOTHING ELSE. HE STATED THAT THE OTHER MATTERS CAN COME LATER AFTER THE CURRENT THREAT IS PAST.

5. COMMENT. IN VIEW OF THE COMMENTS FROM THE AFAR SIDE AS INDICATED IN REFTELS A AND B, THE POST SUGGESTS THAT CON-
SECRET

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PAGE 03 DJIBOU 00084 240903Z

TINUED PRUDENCE (I.E. NO SUCURITY SUPPORT OF ANYTHING TO BE SO CONSTRUED) IN DJIBOUTI IS STILL THE BEST POLICY. IF THE PRESIDENT BELIEVES THAT HE CAN SOLVE HIS DOMESTIC PROBLEMS BY EITHER CREATING A FOREIGN DEVEL (AFTER ALL, THE FRENCH ARE HERE TO PROTECT HIM AGAINST EXTERNAL AGGRESSION) OR BY CONTINUED HAMMERING AGAINST THE AFARS, HE IS OBVIOUSLY FOOLING ONLY HIMSELF. I BELIEVE STRONGLY THAT WE SHOULD CONTINUE OUR CURRENT PLANNING FOR MODEST AID ACTIVITY IN DJIBOUTI. THE EMBASSY CONTINUES TO INSIST THAT PL 480 FOOD BE HANDLED WITHOUT ETHNIC DISTINCTIONS. PLANS FOR AGRICULTURAL MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT PERMIT US TO ENCOURAGE ETHNIC INTERGRATION. IF THE CONTINUED MISSTEPS OF THE HASSAN GOULED GOVERNMENT CAUSE THE COUNTRY TO FALL APART, THIS WILL HAPPEN BEFORE OUR POTENTIAL PROGRAMS REACH MATURITY AND WE WILL STILL HAVE TIME TO STOP PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT.
CLARKE

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NNN

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